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OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON THE QUESTION OF EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION ON AND INCREASE IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL AND MATTERS RELATED TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL

DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE FIFTIETH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Introduction

1. The heads of State, Government and delegation at the special commemorative meeting of the General Assembly on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations adopted a Declaration which explicitly states that "the Security Council should, inter alia, be expanded and its working methods continue to be reviewed in a way that will further strengthen its capacity and effectiveness, enhance its representative character and improve its working efficiency and transparency" (resolution 50/6, para. 14). The Declaration continues "as important differences on key issues continue to exist, further in-depth consideration of these issues is required".

2. The question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council was also dealt with in several statements in the general debate of the General Assembly at its fiftieth session (item 9) and in the statements of heads of State, Government and delegations at the special commemorative meeting. A separate debate on this issue (item 47) was held in the General Assembly. In addition, several statements under the agenda item on the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (item 11) included references to matters pertinent to the work of the Open-Ended Working Group.

3. In its work during the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, the Open-Ended Working Group came to a conclusion, as stated in its report to the Assembly at its forty-ninth session (A/49/47, para. 13), that "discussions showed that there was agreement to expand the Security Council and to review its working methods and other matters related to its functioning in a way that further strengthens its capacity and effectiveness, enhances its representative character and improves its working efficiency". The discussions equally showed "that important differences continue to exist on key issues before the Open-

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Ended Working Group, and, therefore, further in-depth consideration of these issues is still required" (ibid., para. 16).

4. In the observations on and assessment by the Vice-Chairmen of the progress of the work of the Open-Ended Working Group (A/49/965, see also A/49/47, para. 11) the Vice-Chairmen expressed as their personal view that Member States should take full advantage of the momentum offered by the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations and aim for substantial achievements during the session. In this connection, the following questions were made by the Vice-Chairmen:

(a) The Vice-Chairmen's non-papers on clusters I and II, periodically revised and up-dated, should continue to serve as a basis for discussions within the Open-Ended Working Group;

(b) The Secretariat should prepare a compilation of views on Security Council reform expressed during the fiftieth session of the General Assembly and the special commemorative meeting of the General Assembly on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations;

(c) The Open-Ended Working Group should alternate between open-ended formal meetings and open-ended informal consultations, as well as alternate between discussions on clusters I and II;

(d) From the above process, the Open-Ended Working Group should be able to produce a single negotiating text.

Meeting schedule and programme of work of the Open-Ended Working Group

5. At the informal organizational meeting of the bureaux of the different working groups of the General Assembly organized by the President of the General Assembly on 13 December 1995 it was agreed to propose that during the first quarter of 1996 the Open-Ended Working Group on the Security Council should meet on 1 and 2 February, from 26 February to 1 March and from 25 to 29 March.

6. The meetings on 1 and 2 February 1996 would be for a general exchange of views and an assessment of the progress of the work. In the meetings scheduled for late February and March, the Open-Ended Working Group would begin its substantive work. Open-ended informal consultations could be held before the scheduled meetings and during the intervals of the scheduled meetings, as the need arose.

7. In order to facilitate the general discussion and the substantive work of the Open-Ended Working Group, the Secretariat, together with the bureau, would prepare a paper on the views on the Security Council reform expressed during the fiftieth session of the General Assembly and the special commemorative meeting on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. The paper would be distributed to delegations by mid-January.

8. The revised "non-papers" on clusters I and II would attempt to identify areas of agreement and, if possible, lay the groundwork for the drafting of a single negotiating text. Such a single negotiating text would help the Open-Ended Working Group enter into the negotiating phase of its work.